

From: Robert.Neely
Reply To: Robert.Neely@noaa.gov
To: cunninghame@gorge.net
Cc: Chip.Humphrey/R10/USEPA/US@EPA; audiehuber@ctuir.com; ANDERSON.Jim@deg.state.or.us; exec@eiltd.net; howp@critfc.org; jean.lee@eiltd.net; jeremy_buck@fws.gov; Judy.Smith/R10/USEPA/US@EPA; Sylvia.Kawabata/R10/USEPA/US@EPA; Rick.J.Kepler@STATE.OR.US; tomd@ctsi.nsn.us; Sean.Sheldrake/R10/USEPA/US@EPA; Eric.Blischke/R10/USEPA/US@EPA; MCCLINCY.Matt@deg.state.or.us; peterston.jennifer@deg.state.or.us; poulsen.mike@deg.state.or.us; Rene.Fuentes/R10/USEPA/US@EPA; Curt.Black/R10/USEPA/US@EPA; emadden@ecoisp.com; Joe.Goulet/R10/USEPA/US@EPA; Dana.Davoli/R10/USEPA/US@EPA; jeff.baker@grandronde.org; Burt.Shephard/R10/USEPA/US@EPA; OMEALY.Mikell@deg.state.or.us; Kristine.Koch/R10/USEPA/US@EPA; rose@yakama.com; Dan.Opalski/R10/USEPA/US@EPA; Ron.Gouquet
Subject: Re: PH meeting facilitation
Date: 04/18/2006 03:44 PM
Attachments: [Robert.Neely.vcf](#)

Hey Brian,

Having been involved in the Portland Harbor eco-risk technical discussions for the better part of the last year, and in the spirit of collegiality, I'd like to briefly offer NOAA's perspective in response to your message. Like a number of other members of the eco-team, I never did and still do not agree that Mikell's facilitation was ever anything but objective and neutral. In my view, she has helped us tremendously to plow through an enormous workload more efficiently and effectively than would have otherwise been the case. In fact, she's hands-down the best technical facilitator I've seen. Her abilities are quite amazing, really. I can't imagine how we would have gotten through the round 3 data gaps exercise without her help. Anyway, like others, I'm disappointed and concerned.

I believe you are correct in your point that an agreement had been reached at the partners meeting that another person would be pulled in to provide for facilitation. I admit I was never comfortable with this proposal given what I saw as Mikell's proven abilities and objectivity, and the difficult proposition of finding a replacement that wasn't going to be more spin-up work than help for the team. I also admit I was pleased to see her continued involvement, though I appreciate this must have been frustrating for those who were expecting a new person. At that same meeting, however, and as Jeremy has pointed out, we also agreed that the technical meetings would be far more productive if the technical folks were able to take a first cut in the absence of policy folks. Things didn't play out as envisioned in either case.

I guess my final thought is that this whole issue is very unfortunate, frustrating, and extremely distracting. We have a lot of work to do but we're spending on awful lot of time arguing about how to do it, and Mikell is taking an undeserved beating in the process. I hope we can move on quickly.

Thanks,

-R

cunninghame@gorge.net wrote:

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>Chip;
>
>I am concerned about the representation you made in your email regarding Mikell's facilitation
and the concerns you said that have been raised by Environment International. At the Milestone
Meeting, I raised the concerns that the Warm Springs Tribes have about about Mikell's role as a
"neutral" facilitator to you. Mikell is well versed in the process but in my opinion has
demonstrated that she is not neutral and as a result has not allowed needed dialog to occur and
has slighted those individuals that may not agree with her or DEQ's position on a particular
issue. This does not make for good facilitation. I feel strongly that it has not been EI that has
created the counterproductive situation, but the manner in which the most recent concerns
surrounding the lamprey and sturgeon issue have been handled. Don't forget that at the MOU
Partners meeting, EPA told the group that a neutral facilitator would be provided to help resolve
the lamprey/sturgeon issue. This meant a facilitator
> or that is acceptable to the entire group. This didn't occur. I hope this mess can get
straightened out before it gets any uglier.
>
>Brian
>
>
>----- Original Message -----
>From : Humphrey.Chip@epamail.epa.gov[mailto:Humphrey.Chip@epamail.epa.gov]
>Sent : 4/13/2006 2:14:58 PM
>To : audiehuber@ctuir.com; ANDERSON.Jim@deg.state.or.us; cunninghame@gorge.net;
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>Cc : Opalski.Dan@epamail.epa.gov
>Subject : RE: PH meeting facilitation
>
> As a follow-up to the "meeting facilitation" discussion our internal Eco
>Framework meeting last week in Centralia and subsequent conversations
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>with and input from individual project team members, EPA is providing
>our perspective and direction to the project team on meeting
>facilitation.
>
>Eric and I requested of DEQ that Mikell O'Mealy facilitate our framework
>meeting in Centralia and continue in that role during the next couple of
>months while we work through the framework issues with the LWG. Mikell
>is an experienced facilitator with strong team leadership skills, and
>her work on the project thus far has enhanced our ability to reach
>important outcomes for the project. We fully support Mikell's role and
>believe that her attendance and facilitation of meetings benefits the
>project as a whole. The goal, and our experience, is that having Mikell
>facilitate our meetings enhances the productivity of our meetings,
>allows us to capture key ideas and areas of agreement/disagreement and
>provides a critical summary of the conclusions reached and action items.
>
>There have been some concerns raised by EI about Mikell's neutrality
>when acting in the facilitator role. In our view, accusations that
>Mikell does not act in a neutral capacity are unfounded, and we are very
>concerned about the disruptive effects this is having on our "team" and
>our progress at this critical time in the project.
>
>Going forward, Eric and I will continue to make decisions about which of
>our meetings will be facilitated, and we appreciate Mikell's willingness
>to continue to serve as our facilitator. In general, we believe that
>having a facilitator at key meetings is necessary to ensure that our
>meetings remain productive. It is our desire to reach consensus on
>significant issues when possible, but the overall objective is to ensure
>participation in EPA's decision-making process. Some meetings will
>need more formal facilitation to accomplish this, others may not. It
>should also go without saying that, regardless of our disagreements, we
>are all expected to work together in a respectful and professional
>manner.
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>Attached are the principles and process that we will be using for future
>PH meetings.
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>(See attached file: april 10th facilitation.doc)
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